Tythes no Maintenance FOR Goſpel-Miniſters:

MCAL COLLECTION

OR,

A ſeaſonable Diſcourſe concerning Tythes.

Wherein it is fully proved,

That thoſe who urge the payment thereof for their maintenance, are no true Goſpel-Miniſters, but Antichriſtian, and do concur with Prieſts of the Leviticall Order and Inſtitution.

Occaſioned by a PROPOSITION, with nine Reaſons laid down for the proof thereof, which was lately printed and publiſhed, holding forth the dreadfull danger of *Sacriledge* and ſin even in the higheſt nature in the with-holding of Tythes.

Which ſaid PROPOSITION, with the Reaſons therein contained at large are hereunto annexed, the groſſe abſurdities thereof briefly diſcuſſed and confuted, and the Truth vindicated and cleered from thoſe miſts and fogge of Judaiſm and Antichriſtian darkneſſe which the *Propoſer* hath darkened it withall.

By *T. H.* and *T. R.*

Expens T. R Auth

1 John 4. 1. *Beloved, believe not every ſpirit, but trie the ſpirits whether they are of God, becauſe many falſe Prophets are gone out into the world.*

Rev. 2. 9. ——— *I know the blaſphemy of them which ſay they are Jews and are not, but are the ſynagogue of Satan.*

Jer. 6. 13. *For from the leaſt of them even to the greateſt of them, every one is given to covetouſneſſe, and from the Prophet even unto the Prieſt every one dealeth falſly.*

LONDON,
Printed by *R. A.* for *William Larnar* at the Black-Moore neer Fleet-bridge, and *Thomas Heath* in *Martins le Grand.* 1652.

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To all who love the Lord Iesus Christ in sincerity.

IF the mystery of iniquity did begin to work in the Apostles time? if there were false Apostles, deceitfull workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ? If there were the Ministers of Satan? who were transformed as the Ministers of righteousnesse, whose end should be according to their works? And if we are exhorted to try the Spirits whether they are of God, (upon this accompt) because many false Prophets are gone out into the world. Then no marvell is it, that the factors and agents for Antichrist are so encreased, and the Mystery of Iniquity grown to such maturity and ripenesse, nay (may we not rather say) to such boldnesse and impudency, that they are not ashamed to open their pack of Romish Trumpery (we meane) their unwritten Traditions and humane Constitutions in the sight and view of the whole world, and these their musty and putrified wares, for sound and substantiall commodities, would they force upon tender consciences, whom God hath inlightned to

2 Thes. 2. 7
2 Cor. 11. 13, 14, 15.
1 Joh. 4. 1.

 discover

discover the slights and cunning craftinesse of these
Eph.4.14. grand Impostors, whereby they lye in wait to deceive. One piece of which their Merchantable stuffe most cunningly and artificially woven together, with Scriptures absurdly applied, and others as lamentably perverted, is here presented unto your view,
Rev.3.18. whose eyes the Lord hath annoynted with his eyesalve to discern the wiles and workings of Satan in these men. And although evill men and seducers
2 Tim. 3. 13. shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being de-
Job.17.9 ceived, yet the righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger: And although many deceivers are entred into the
2 John 7. world, who confesse not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. (and such are all they, who would bring us back again unto *Moses*, and presse the Observation of Leviticall Rites and Ceremonies upon the conscience, which are altogether abolished and done away by the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh) And al-
Rev.8.22. & 19.20. though Antichrist by his Sorceries hath deceived the
Esa.44.20 Nations, and a deceived heart hath turned many aside, that they cannot deliver their soul, nor say, Is there not a lye in my right hand? yet it is not possi-
Mat. 24. 24. ble, that the Elect shall be deceived by them. Beloved you are those who are taught of God, *Esa.* 54. 13. 1 *John* 2. 21. those to whom he hath revealed his secrets, *Psal.* 25. 14. who have the gift of trying and discerning the Spirits, 1 *John* 4. 1. and therefore we could not but recommend unto you this ensuing Treatise, wherein we hope we have discovered the grosse absurdity of that Proposition, and have vindicated the truth from that error and darknesse which

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the Propoſer hath clouded it withall; and truly our conſciences do beare us witneſſe, that it was not out of any prejudice to the perſon of the Propoſer, but the love which we beare unto Truth, that did ſtir up our ſpirits to this undertaking; and the rather, ſo that the Author of the ſaid paper, who being a chief man of the Presbyterian Sect, and pretends himſelf a Miniſter of the Goſpell, hath ſaid ſuch high accuſations againſt the moſt conſcientious people, charging them with ſin in the higheſt aggravations thereof, with temporall and ſpirituall judgements accompanying it, threatning alſo no leſſe then eternall death againſt them in a caſe where no Law is tranſgreſſed. And to inforce his accuſation and charge of ſin and judgement, how notoriouſly hath he wreſted and perverted the Scriptures? diſhonoring the Lord, and falſifying his truth, which was ſo great a trouble unto our ſpirits, that we could not be ſilent. Nor would we be thought to be diſobedient to that authority which God hath ſet over us, and under which we live, and through his bleſſing do enjoy much freedome, protection, and preſervation.

We profeſſe our ſubjection to Magiſtracy in all lawfull things that are commanded by them, only in the matters of God, and of his Chriſt our Lord and Saviour, and wherin the glory of God is ſo highly concerned, it is our deſire to keep our conſciences pure and undefiled, remembring alwayes, that the Laws of God muſt have the preheminence, and all humane Lawes and Ordinances muſt and ought to be ſubordinate thereunto. And in reference unto his Houſe, which is ſpirituall, we can acknowledge no other

other King or Law-giver save Christ alone: We
Joh. 5 44. look not to receive honour from men, but we seek the honour that cometh from God onely. And if the Lord will vouchsafe to honour his Truth by such poor and unworthy Instruments as we are, we shall account it honour enough.

Thomas Heath.

Thomas Rosewell.

The dreadfull danger of *Sacriledge*, held forth in this one Propoſition: Namely,

The with-holding of Tythes from a Miniſter that labours in the Word and Doctrine, or denying thoſe accuſtomed rates upon houſes, which have been paid to the Miniſters ſucceſsively, time out of mind, is a great and grievous ſin, highly diſpleaſing to Almighty God, as appears by theſe Reaſons.

1. *Reaſ.* BEcauſe it is a direct breach of the eighth Commandement, which ſaith, *That thou ſhalt not ſteal*; and directly contrary to the Rule of the Apoſtle, *Rom.*13.7. *Render therefore to all their dues, Cuſtome to whom Cuſtome, &c.*

Yea Tythes are due to the Miniſter by the Law of the Land, and the Miniſter hath as legall a right to the rates ſet upon houſes, as the Landlord hath to his rent; therefore to deprive the Miniſter of them is a breach, not only of Gods Law, but alſo of mans Law, and *whoſo breaketh this hedge, a Serpent ſhall bite him.* Eccleſ. 10. 8.

1. Object. *But tythes are antichriſtian, and therefore not to be paid any longer.*

Anſw. This is a falſe opinion, as appears by this Argument; That which our Saviour enjoyned is not Antichriſtian, but our Saviour enjoyned tythes, Luke 11.42. *Ye tythe, mint, and rue, and all manner of herbs, and paſſe over Judgement and the Love of God: theſe ought ye to have done*; that is, ye ought to pay tythes, therefore they are not antichriſtian.

2. Object. *But we do not come to hear him, why then ſhould we pay him, ſince we have no benefit by his Miniſtery?*

Anſw.

Answ. If thou live in a Parish where a godly Minister is seated, thou art bound to hear him, for he worketh *the work of the Lord, as well as these of greater parts.* See 1 *Cor.* 16. 10. If thou do not hear him, nor pay him, thou addest sin to sin; for first it is a sin to withdraw thy presence, and then it is another, yea a greater sin, to withdraw his maintenance.

3. Object. *But the Minister will not give us our due in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, therefore we may justly deny him his due?*

Answ. First, The Sacrament is not due to all, but onely to those that come in a regular way, according to the order of the Gospel, for all things must be done decently, and in order, 1 *Cor.* 13. 40. Now the order of the Gospel is this, that the power of examining those that are admitted to the Lords Supper, belongs not to the Minister alone, nor to the Minister with the whole Congregation, but to the Minister and ruling Elders, as is undeniably proved by that singular Treatise set forth by the Provincial Assembly, called *the Vindication of the Presbyterian Government, pag.* 70, 71. Secondly, the Sacrament is not due to those that live in any scandalous sin; but theft, or robbing of God is a scandalous sin.

2. *Reas.* It is a sin of a high nature, because it affronts God himself, *Mal.* 3. 8. *Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? in Tythes and Offerings.* To rob a man by the high-way doth deserve death, to rob a King of his Plate and Jewels deserves a tormenting death, but to rob the King of Glory, deserves the fire of hell.

3. *Reas.* It is a complicated sin, wherein fraud or cheating is added to theft: For the Landlord lets his house to the Tenant at a lower rate, upon this account; namely, that he shall pay the duties to the Minister: As for example, if the house be worth 21. l. *per annum*, the Landlord lets it for 20. l. *per annum*, on purpose that the Tenant may (perhaps) pay twenty shillings a year to the Minister. The Tenant notwithstanding payes nothing, but keeps it back from the Minister by fraud, and puts the Landlords money in his pocket. Here is fraud with a Witnesse.

4. *Reas.* It is a sin, whereby godly Ministers are discouraged in

in their work, their hands weakned, and their ſpirits broken, ſo that they cannot go on in their Miniſtery with *joy, but with griefe*; this is directly contrary to the practiſe of that godly King *Hezekiah*, (whoſe example is written for our learning, *Rom.* 15. 4.) for it is teſtified of him, 2 Chron. 31. 4. *that he commanded the people that dwelt in Jeruſalem, to give the portion of the Prieſts and Levites, that they might be incouraged in the Law of the Lord.*

5. *Reaſ.* It is a ſin wherein and whereby the defrauder robs his own ſoul of that ſpiritual benefit and advantage which he might get by ſuch a mans Miniſtery; for it is juſt with God to ſay to ſuch a man, thou withdraweſt maintenance from my ſervant, and I will withdraw my bleſſing from my own Ordinance, ſo that the word preached (by whomſoever it be diſpenſed) ſhall do thee no good at all, but rather it ſhall be a ſavour of death, to thy own condemnation. Thy ſoule ſhall never thrive or proſper by any Sermon that thou heareſt.

6. *Reaſ.* It is a ſin that provokes God to curſe a man in his outward eſtate and trading, as appears by that forenamed place, *Mal.* 3. 9. *Ye are curſed with a curſe, for ye have robbed me*: It is uſuall with God to pay ſinners with their own coyn; they rob God in tythes, and God robs them of their trade and livelyhood; they grudge the Miniſters a maintenance, and God grudgeth them even bread for their Families, ſo that they uſually turn bankerupts, or are ſo much in debt, that they are aſhamed to ſhew their faces.

7. *Reaſ.* It is a ſin againſt the Goſpel, becauſe it hinders the progreſs and ſucceſs of it, for ſuch men do as much as in them lies to extingniſh the light, by taking away the oyl that feeds it. It is obſerved in that excellent book *Vindic. Presb. Gov. pag.* 81. that *Julian* the Apoſtate, that curſed enemy of Chriſt and his Goſpell, did by taking away tythes do more miſchiefe to the Church of God, than all the perſecuting Emperors that were before him; for the Perſecutors took away only the Miniſters, (and their blood was the ſeed of the Church) but taking away tythes, took away the Miniſtery it ſelf.

8. *Reaſ.* It is a ſin will not be pardoned upon repentance, unleſſe there be a reſtitution as well as repentance, according to

to that of *Auguſtine, Non remittitur peccatum, niſi reſtituatur ablatum*, Thy ſin ſhall not be pardoned, unleſſe that which thou with-holdeſt unjuſtly be reſtored.

9. *Reaſ.* It is a ſin that will cry for vengeance, when the ſinner on his death-bed is crying for mercy, as appears by that remarkable Scripture, *Jam.* 5. 2, 4. *Your gold and ſilver is cankered, and the ruſt of them ſhall be a witneſſe againſt, and ſhall eat your fleſh as it were with fire; Ye have heaped treaſure* (that's of wrath) *together for the laſt dayes. Behold the hire of the Labourers which have reaped down your fields which is of you kept back by fraud crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabbath.* Now if the hire of the Labourers in mens Vineyard, kept back by fraud crieth, how dreadfull will the cry be of the hire of Gods Labourers in Gods Vineyard, kept back by robbers and defrauders? I tremble to think of it.

Conſider what hath been preſented unto you in this paper, and the Lord give ye underſtanding in all things.

Courteous Reader,

THis enſuing diſcourſe was intended for publike view before this time, but received ſome interruption, which occaſioned the delay thereof; yet we hope it will be ſeaſonable, *and not prove* Abortive, *as one that is born out of due time: And though ſome have gone before us, whoſe ſpirits have been ſtirred up to the ſame undertaking, (for which we rejoyce and bleſſe God) yet we can truly ſay, we have not lighted our Candle at their Lamp: And in this we are very much comforted and incouraged, conſidering, that in the mouth of two or three Witneſſes, the Truth will receive the greater eſtabliſhment.*

TYTHES

No Maintenance for Gospel-Ministers:

OR,
A seasonable Discourse concerning TITHES, &c.

WE shall omit to insert any thing as touching the name of the Author of the said Proposition, By reason that he is either afraid to own it, or ashamed to publish it, remembring what our Saviour saith, *John* 3.20,21. That *every one that doth evill hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved: but he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.* But to the Proposition it self.

P. *The withholding of tythes from a Minister that labors in the word and doctrine, or denying those accustomed rates upon houses which have been paid to Ministers successively time out of mind, is a great and grievous sin, highly displeasing to almighty God,* as the Author or Publisher of the said Paper would make it appeare

peare by the Reasons laid down in the said Paper.

The Proposition holds forth sin displeasing to God, therefore we shal reply somwhat as touching it, & the grounds laid down to plead the force of his Proposition, which are two. First, his being a Minister that labors in the Word & Doctrine; and secondly, *accustomed rates set upon houses, which have been paid successively to such Ministers time out of mind.* Concerning the first, it would be very requisite, that he would prove himself a true Minister set apart by God for that work, and chosen by a true Church which hath approved of his gifts; and then secondly, for custome, we do affirm that they are not to be obeyed without they are grounded upon a command from God, or example out of the Word of God. But grant he were a true Gospel-Minister, yet ought he not to plead custome or antiquity, to force men to pay Tythes, which were due only to the Priests that served at the Altar, *Numb:* 18. 24, 26. under the Ceremoniall Leviticall Law: And as all types and ceremonies pointed to their anti-types, so the antitype being produced, the type ceaseth: But Tythes were a ceremony of the Leviticall Law, and *Christ is the end of the Law for righteousnesse to every one that believeth*; and we hope, that none of them that call themselves Gospel-Ministers, will be called Priests of the Leviticall Law, and presse Tythes for their maintenance, or rather as their wages, which was the wages of the Priests, *Num.* 18.31. *Heb.* 7. 12. which offered up sacrifices and burnt-offerings; but Christ hath put an end to all Priesthood and sacrifice under the Law, and the Priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the Law, except you will shew us a command or precept under the Gospel.

Here he sheweth the weaknesse of his argument, having no Scripture, but ancient custome, which was from a Popish institution, which are not rules for Christians to observe.

But you will say, shall not your person be maintained? We answer, if one that truly labours in the Word and Doctrine, would lay down a precept for his maintenance, let him shew what the Lord hath ordained; that *they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel*; but Tythes are not Gospel-precepts.

1 Cor. 9. 14.

Again, whereas you say, it is a sin of that nature, as to term it *sacriledge*, or robbing of God, we hope, you will be more

more calm in the censure of men, who through tenderness of conscience (desiring to do nothing but what they may have a word for their rule) refuse the payment of Tythes: But we think it may be safer said, that you rob God of his glory, in setting your self in the seat of God; for by demanding of Tythes, you take the Priesthood upon your self, which is now ceased. Tythes typified the great High-Priest of our soules Christ Jesus, who hath by one offering put an end to all Sacrifices and Priesthood; and hath also paid the debt that was due for sin; how then can we rob God, except it be of his glory? For matter of debt, he is fully satisfied; but if it had been before the time of our delivery by Christ, and we had been Jews, and you had been of the Tribe of *Levi*, and ordained to serve at the Altar, then, under that dispensation, if we had not paid you Tythes, you must have said, that we had robbed God: But the Lord be praised, those dayes of bondage are ended: Oh that the Lord would open your hearts, and convince your consciences of this your blind zeall But we shall leave this your rash censure, and reply further, in that you plead *accustomed rates set upon houses which have been paid time out of mind.* Heb. 10. from 1. to 15. vers.

We demand first, whether you are ignorant of the time when it began, that Tythes were first imposed upon the Tenants by the Landlord? We fear your great predecessor, the Man of sin, and the See of *Rome*, were the first institutors of that superstitious Idol, as imposition of Tythes, who teach for doctrines the traditions of men, and so make the commandement of God of none effect by their traditions, *Mat.* 15. 6, 7.

Secondly, What reason have you to plead antient custome, when as you live under the Gospel, and say you are labourers in the word and doctrine; of what? of the Law? then indeed you may urge custome from antiquity; but if of the Gospel, why not a Gospel-precept? But we blame you not to seek to blind the eys of the ignorant by your antient customs. What greater arguments have the Jesuites, to maintain their corrupt principles, then Antiquity? as if men under the Gospel seek for rules elsewhere then the Word of

God: But we fear that the love of money hath blinded your eys, that you cannot see, or discover the true meaning of that which the Apostle meaneth, that *they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel*; 1 *Cor.*9.14. though the Apostle used it not, but rather laboured with his hands: But why should we speak of laboring wth the hands, so long as you plead the law &customs of men? for then you have strength enough on your side: but God is to be obeyed before men. But to leave this; While God shall put it into the hearts of our Rulers, to search whether or no this ancient Law and Custome hath its foundation from the Gospell, which is and ought, and (we hope, thorough Gods mercy, ever shall be our rule. But now to come to the Reasons you alledge to maintain your Proposition.

P. First you say, *It is a breach of the eighth Commandement, which saith*, Thou shalt not steal: *and directly contrary to the rule of the Apostle*, Rom.13.7. *Render therfore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due*, &c.

R. You think you have something now on your side, but pray consider, whether or no the Apostle speaks there concerning Tithes; his injunction is for paying of tribute, which might lawfully be required by a civill power or Authority, and in such things there is no tie on the conscience, or snare, by which it is intrapped; but, as our Saviour commanded, that what was *Cæsar's* due should be paid or given unto *Cæsar*, which is all one to those accustomed assesments or rates now set on men, by those that God hath set in authority: And look in the verses foregoing your text, they are such *powers as are ordained by God*, and are *Ministers for God to minister justice*: But what is this argument or reason of any force to prove the lawfulness of paying Tythes to Ministers under the Gospell? But you positively affirm, *That the Minister hath, by the Law of God, as legall a right to the rates set upon houses, as the Landlord hath to his rent*; which we deny absolutely; for according to your former argument, *time out of mind*, the Landlords had Law for their rent, or a right to their rent by Law, before ever Law was made for paying of Tythes to Ministers, except you will prove the antiquity of your Law,

Mat.22.21

from

from God's injunction of the children of Israel to pay tythes of all they possessed: And again, the Landlord hath more right to his rent then you have to tythes, for many Landlords have right to their lands and houses by inheritance, but you have but a bare right from a humane institution, and that by a Law not as yet abolished by the State now in being.

But if we should grant, as we cannot, except you shew better reason then your bare positive affirmation, that it is as lawfull for the one, as for the other: Yet wee wonder, you have no proofe of Scripture for your argument, knowing, or rather having ought to have knowne, that it is the onely rule, whereby the people of God ought to walk: Therefore we conclude, that it is no breach of the eighth commandement, insomuch as no command of God is broken; and to charge the non-payment of tythes to be theft, we know not how you can make it good, except you prove a right, or that you have a right by the Law of God, to the money, or ware, or what els we do enjoy.

But you add further, that *it is a breach of the Law of God*, and that you would prove in the answer to the first objection, which is *That to pay tythes is antichristian, therefore not to be paid any longer*, which you call a *false opinion*, and would make it appear by this argument of yours, viz. *That which our Saviour enjoyned is not antichristian, but our Saviour enjoyned tythes*, Luke 11.42. *Ye tythe Mint, Rue, and all manner of herbs, and passe over iudgment and the love of God; these ought ye to have done*; that is, say you, *ye ought to pay tythes, therfore they are not antichristian.*

We desire that you will again consider this Scripture, both the person speaking, and the persons spoken unto; here is Christ by way of reprehension reproving the Pharisees for their formality, and pretending to make conscience of the smallest matters, when the chiefest and weightiest things of the Law were neglected by them; *Woe to you Pharisees, for ye tythe mint, &c.* And we know that the Pharisees were Jewes and unbelievers, therefore as yet not freed from the Ceremoniall Law. Therefore it was a Law to them, and requisite for them to fulfill, but we hope you will not affirm, that this

was Christs Injunction to the Disciples, or to those that believe that Christ is come in the flesh; for the Apostle said, that whosoever was circumcised; was bound to keep the Law; and even so denies that Christ is come in the flesh.

Therefore if Tythes be also a ceremoniall right or precept, it holds forth (as was said before) that the thing signified being come, the sign is ended. For Circumcision and Tythes washing, and purifyings are held out by the Holy Ghost in the 9. of the *Heb.* 10. *v.* to continue but to the time of reformation; therfore we deny positively that Tythes were by Christ enjoyned to believers; and then if you have no stronger argument to prove that Tythe is the Injunction of Christ, either by precept or example from him, or from the Apostles for believers to observe, we cannot be evinced by that which you inferre from that in the 11. of *Luke* 42. *v.*

Then of necessity the objection stands firm, and not yet overthrown, or proved a false opinion, to wit, that to pay Tythes to Ministers of the Gospell is Anti-christian; for what is not for, or with Christ, is against Christ; but to pay Tythes, is not for, or with Christ: *Ergo* Anti-christian.

P. Again, whereas you proceed in your answer to the second objection; *but we do not come to hear him, why then should we pay him, since we have no benefit by his Ministery?* Your answer is, *If thou live in a Parish where a godly Minister is seated, thou art bound to hear him, for he worketh the work of the Lord, as well as those of greater parts,* 1 Cor. 16. 10. *If thou doe not hear him, nor pay him, thou addest sin to sin; first it is a sin to withdraw thy presence, and then it is another, yea a greater, to withdraw his maintenance.*

Now you go about; first, to insinuate not only the lawfulnesse of your own calling to be a Minister of the Gospel truly called, &c. by the gifts and parts which God hath endued men withall.

But secondly, you lay also an Injunction upon all in the Parish wherein you are seated, to come and hear you, by the charge you lay of committing two sins, the withdrawing the presence, and the withdrawing your maintenance.

But for the first argument, we conceive, that as you have not

not brought any proof of Scripture to prove your calling to be a true Minister of the Gospell; therefore we shall not need to raise any argument to disprove you, but shall remain desirous of some satisfaction in that particular; for though gifts and parts are essentiall to a Minister of the Gospell, yet that is but one part of his calling; it is requisite that he be chosen and ordained by a true Church; for that Scripture which you have brought in the *Corinths* concerning *Timothy* doth in no wise prove you to be so; then, if no true Minister, the force of that argument must fall to the ground.

Secondly, We must then be at a losse in our answer to the inference which you draw, that *living in a Parish, we ought to come and hear*; but the Spouse of Jesus Christ, in the first of the *Canticles*, doth inquire for Christ's aboad and residence, which is, to the *flocks of his companions*; & except you can prove that a Parish is a true church, your argument is of no force to draw any to the place of the assembling, *for where there is no Law, there is no sin*; but you have charged sin, where you can shew no Institution; pray, why do not you preach this to be a sin, to those which live in Parishes far distant from you, and yet come to hear you, where (for ought you can judge) are godly Ministers, and yet they leave their owne Parish, and go to hear some in one Parish, and some in another? Again, how can that be charged as sin, for *not coming to hear in the Parish wherein they live*? when, as in the first place, their tender consciences cannot eat or drink with those that are not as yet separated, and come out of the world, and joyned in a church fellowship; and therefore where there is no Union there can be no Communion. Secondly, though they may live in your Parish, yet the assembly whereof they are members, meet two or three Parishes off, and in the rule of equity how can you judge these sinners, that goe out of your Parish to heare for their further edification and growth in the knowledge of Christ, in obedience to the rule of the Apostle, not forsaking the assembling themselves together, as the manner of some is; but with whom? with the Church where Christ hath promised his presence, as that, *where two or three are gathered together in his Name, he will be in the midst of them*; Heb. 10. 25.

them; but mind, we pray you, it must be in his Name, that is, according to his example in the order of the Gospell, not with *Babylon*, which signifies [*a confusion of mixture*] from whence the people of God are to come out. Again, If Christs presence be with his people so met together, then where should they go but there? and out of such a people are Pastors and Teachers to be chosen, who have the teachings of the Spirit of God, accompanied with the knowledge of the word of God, which is able to make the *man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*. 2 *Tim*. 3. 17. These are those Shepheards that come in at the right door, spoken of in the tenth of *John*, whose voice, those which are sheep, will hear, but those which are thieves, and robbers, or strangers, which come in by other wayes, these they will not heare. But you say, *where a godly Minister is seated, there we ought to heare*: But pray tell us, whether God and *Beliall* can live together, how came you by that Ministeriall Office? had it not its rise from the Bishops and Prelates, and they their rise from the Pope? and though you have put on a faire glosse, and assumed to your selves of late the name of *Presbyters*, have you yet openly denied the other, so as to have disclaimed that Ordination by which you stand? is not the same language of the Beast sounded forth from your mouths, as proceeded from the mouth of the first Beast? did you not shew your selves bitter against those that could not submit to what you had agreed upon in the Classicall Assembly? and when you had the power in your hands, did you not vex, molest, and imprison the Saints of God? and how far might your blind zeale have transported you, had you not been strucken down by a mighty hand? but blessed be God, the great Reformer, whose direction is far better, and gives more light into his will, then all the Presbyterian Directory could do; therefore send us not, we beseech you, to the *Directory*, but to the *word of God*; but however we are by you judged or censured for not coming to hear you, yet you will not judge them that come a mile or two to hear you, sooth them up in their ignorance.

2 Cor. 6. 17.
Rev. 18. 4.

Again, you make the forbearance of paying you Tythes, to

to be *a greater sinne, then the not hearing of the Word of God.*

We even blush to hear you; but it is true, covetousnesse will stretch the judgement many times to great and large sins, as well of Error, as of Practise; had you not by your paper discovered so much grosse, and almost unparallel'd and absurd hypocrisie, which makes us even tremble to read it, we should not have beene so pressed in our Spirit to enter upon these replies; and we hope the Lord in his time, (as he hath) so he will more discover the hypocrisie of your bitter hearts against those tender consciences that dare not yeeld obedience to that Law, as yet not taken away by the power now in being; but we hope the Lord will give them eyes to see the great oppression that lyeth upon the Nation in that particular. But to proceed, pray consider what you have affirmed, to make the non-payment of Tythes a *greater sin, then the not hearing the Word of God.* Consider (we pray) the effects of hearing the word of God, is it not the meanes by which Faith is begotten in the heart, (as saith the Apostle in the 10. of the *Rom.* 14.) and whereby knowledge is encreased, especially, when those declare it that are the true dispensators of the Word of God; and certainly if your love were more for the gaining of poor souls, then it is unto money, which is the root of all evill, you would be of another mind, and follow the example of the * Apostle † *Paul,* which would rather work with his hands then be chargeable to the Churches; and if your tongues were touched with a coal from Gods Altar, as was *Isayas*, the Prophets, you would then be of another mind; but the Lord open your eyes, that if by any meanes you may see the hardnesse of your hearts. But we have learned better of our Saviour Jesus Christ, then to be of your judgment in that particular. What maintenance is it that you mean? is it Tythes? that is cleare to be the wages of the Priest that served at the Altar; But that hath been handled already: and now we are not to look back to the Law for our rule, nor to the *Directory* made by your Assembly; For if an Angell from heaven were to declare us any other rule, then the doctrine which our Lord and Saviour hath

* Acts 10. 33,34,35. 1 Cor. 9. 18.

† *Who without question did mind the fulfilling of the Commission of our Saviour* Mat. 10. 8,9. *verse.* Freely ye have received, freely give

hath taught us, we are commanded to eſchew it, &c. But tythes are not the inſtitution of Chriſt (as you falſly affirm) for believers to obſerve, therefore no ſin: but to heare, is the command of God; *Matth.* 17.5. *This is my beloved Son, hear him.* Therefore not to hear, is a great ſin, and we hope any judicious man which is of your own judgment, will ſay a greater, then the non-payment of tythes.

But for the third Objection which you have anſwered, *viz. But the Miniſter will not give us our due in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; therfore we may inſtly deny him his due.*

This indeed may by ſome of your Pariſhioners be objected, who out of blind zeal may ſuppoſe they have a right to that Goſpel-Ordinance, when they have not; and where it is not to be had: And whereas you bring that Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 14.40. *Let all things be done decently and in order*; you may know there the Apoſtle ſpeaks of *prophecying one by one*, and therein order and decency ought to be obſerved, yet not reſtraining the liberty of any from ſpeaking, but being a member of a true Church, and gifted by the Spirit of God, he may ſpeak to edification. *The Apoſtle did not monopolize the work of the Miniſtery*; but exhorted all the Church ~~to covet~~ to covet to propheſie, and ſaith, *Ye may all propheſie one by one*; and *Moſes* wiſhed *all the Lords people were Prophets*: But to come to your anſwer, ſeeing this Scripture makes not for your purpoſe in that particular, whereas you hold forth to the eys of the world, that you would do nothing but what may be according to the order of the Goſpel. We ſhould have liked your argument well, if you would have declared an order from the Goſpell for tythes: but if you cannot prove from the Goſpel your practiſe, you will (like thoſe who are ready to ſink) catch hold of a ſtraw to keep your head above water; you will run to the lawes of man, ſo from humane precepts infer Goſpel-inſtitutions: So you bring the vindication of the Presbyterian Government as undeniable, to prove your examining of perſons: But what rule have you from the Goſpel for this your practice, that we muſt ſearch mens works and leave the Word of God, which is the onely means of ſalvation. Our Saviour ſends the Jews to *ſearch the Scriptures*;

1 Cor. 14. 31. 39. Numb. 11 29.

ptures, not any learned Father, or Treatise made by Synods. The *Bereans* would not receive the doctrines, or teachings of the Apostles, before they had searched in the Word of God, to know *whether those things were so or no*, for which they were called *more noble then those of Thessalonica*; but as it hath been held forth by the *See of Rome*; that *Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion*: See if you can perswade men to believe the worship you hold forth, as to pay Tythes, and come to be examined by a few ignorant men, (*such who are chosen many times for your Elders*) who have more need of examination themselves oftentimes, then many poor souls, which you debar from that, which you call the Supper of the Lord.

Again, we wonder you are not ashamed to charge us with scandalous sins, as to tearm us *Thieves and Robbers*, and that *of God*; but we hope your Kingdome is falling, and now seeing your time is short, you begin to rage with open mouth, yet all you can say will not adde one day to your continuation, you have not in the least proved your selves Gods Ministers, neither have you proved a command from God to pay Tythes, how then can you call us robbers; you learn not these rash censures of the Apostle, who was free in the dispensation of the Gospell, and thirsted more after the gaining of poore souls to the knowledge of the truth, then after their moneys or inheritance: it was not Tythes, or great living that opened their mouths, but love to the promulgation of the Gospell of Jesus Christ, where is there that love in any of you, that will rather leave whole Parishes destitute of meanes, we mean of that which you call labouring in the Gospell) and seek for greater livings? Is this the right doore by which a true Pastor ought to come into the sheepfold? but you are ratther indeed right *thieves* and *robbers*, which rob not onely God of his glory, by attributing to your selves the Priesthood, but you also rob the people; First, of their souls benefit, which they might receive from a true Minister: Secondly, of their moneys, to which you have no right by the Law of God. How many poor men are there in this Nation, that *groane under the great bondage of Tythes*, who have not so much as wil maintain their own charge with their great pains

and industry, and you will rack the tythe of all their labour the whole yeare, and also of the fruit thereof, think you not that the cry of this oppressing sin doth cry for vengeance; and certainly the avenger of bloud will in his time avenge their cause; and when that false Prophet spoken of *Rev.* 19: 20. is taken, he shall with all his false Teachers be judged; and think you, that then the *Tythe-hunters* shall escape? what are their deserts we dare not judge, though you are so rash as to judge poor tender consciences to hell fire. Further to proceed to the third reason, and to examine what weight or shew of truth is in it, for the former, he that hath but an eye of reason may discerne, that covetousnesse hath so choaked them of your judgement, that truth cannot be received by them.

Your third reason, *It is a complicated sin, wherein fraud or cheating is added to theft, for the Landlord lets his house to the Tenant upon this accompt, namely, that he shall pay the duties to the Minister: As for example, if the house be worth* 21. *l.* per annum, *the Landlord lets it for* 20. *l.* per annum, *on purpose perhaps that the Tenant may pay* 20. *s. to the Minister* per annum, *the Tenant notwithstanding payes nothing, but keeps it back from the Minister by fraud, and puts the Landlords money into his owne pocket, here is fraud with a Witnesse.*

Here take notice how you charge a duplicated sin, we confesse if you were, as you look upon your selves to be, a true Teacher or Instructer of a people, it were your duty to inform them, and dehort them from any known sin, which they live or continue in; but if the foregoing reasons, with the Proposition, have no force to prove the non-payment of tythes to be a sinne, then of neceffity this aggravating reason, or conclusion, must in like manner fall to the ground.

For our parts we are so far from conceiving it a sinne of such a nature, that we should sin in so saying: But to come home to your reason, tearming it *a cheat, or defrauding*, pray what is your intention, in that you say *they defraud*? First you say, it is *the Landlords money that he puts in his pocket, though it was the Landlords intention he should pay the Minister his due*: First, this is that which ever before we were ignorant of, but

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if it be as you affirm, the Landlord must also comply with the Parson, and so are both, as *Simeon* and *Levi, brethren in evill*; and what do you else then defraud the poor Tenant? by ensnaring of him to do that which is a direct sin against his light, and do (as much as in you lye) cause him to deny Christ come in the flesh, in imposing upon him a ceremoniall Law, which were all one, as if you would teach Circumcision and burnt Offering; but as the Apostle demanded in *Gal.* 3. *who had bewitched them from the love of the truth*? So may we say, who hath bewitched you, *O ye foolish Presbyterian Priests!* that you are so fallen into such a contrariety to truth, that is that which God hates, for men to halt between two opinions: If the worship of Christ be to be observed? if he be Lord of all, let him be Lord? but if the ceremoniall Law be that which is now our rule; then let us have Priests, and Levites, and burnt Offerings, and Sacrifices: are these the Reformers of Religion, that seek by their *Directory* to delude the Nation, and bring them into a greater bondage then ever the Israelites were? That after the profession of the glorious Gospell of Jesus Christ, (which makes men Christs free men) to be inslaved again into bondage, and moreover to enact Lawes, Institutions and Ordinances of men, to inforce the consciences of men; and if that will not do, to set *Promoters* on their backs, and to imprison men, and seize on their goods, and take them by force; is not this *theft* and *defrauding* (as we may say) *with a Witnesse*? But we hope those that are entrusted with *Englands Liberty*, will shortly see and take notice of this great bondage of the Commons. we mean the poor country people, who have so much suffered in this behalfe, and yet have had no redresse, and also the insulting cruelty of those bloudy Priests or Presbyters, that (like *Meroz*) *came not out to help the Lord against the mighty*; but when they did see their *Dagon* was like to fall, together with Regall Dignity, laid all their heads together to uphold that power, which the Lord had determined to overthrow; and whilest they were seen to be fighters against God, he took of their Chariot wheels that they drove heavily, and were overthrown, as *Pharoah* and his Host; yet the Lord suffers them

a little while, if by any means they would see the deceipt and hypocrisie of their hearts; and if this writing will not work its kindly effects, then let them take heed of the woe that is coming forth against them, and that this last snare prove not a greater overthrow to their Kingdome then the first: This one thing we heartily desire, that God would please to let them see this the errour of their hearts, before the great judgment fall down upon them: but we shall leave, and come to the fourth reason you give.

It is a sin whereby godly Ministers are discouraged in their work, their hands weakned, and their Spirits broken, so that they cannot go on in their Ministery with joy, but with grief. This is directly contrary to that godly King Hezekiah, *whose example is written for our learning,* Rom. 15. 4. *for it is testified of him,* 2 Cron. 31. 4. *that he commanded the people that dwelt in Hiernsalem, to give the portion of the Priests, and the Levites, that they might be incouraged in the Law of the Lord.*

Here the world may take notice of your zeal in the publication of the Gospell, whether it be not covetousnesse that steers you in all your proceedings, you cannot forget the Garlick and Onyons, which was the food of the children of Israel, which made them grumble and murmure against God, and against *Moses*, by which their hearts were enfeebled; and it is now the great disease most of you are troubled withall, as the French saying is, (*faulte d' Argent*, want of money.) Now your great benefices are taken away, by which many of your Lords waxed wanton.

Now the great complaint is, *want of maintenance*, and therefore you cry out, *The work of the Lord goeth slowly on*: but we hope by this time you will be ashamed to assume to your selves the names of Priests and Levites, but by the inferences you draw, you make people believe no lesse, by reason that all the refuge you have to fly unto for the maintenance of tythes is to the ceremoniall Law, as in that place noted by you, 2 *Chron.* 31. 4. The exhortation of the King *Hezekiah* to the people, *to give the portion to the Priests and Levites to encourage them*: First, consider, as we have before declared, that this portion was their wages for their work, but it is o-

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therwiſe with Goſpell Miniſters; what wages had the Diſciples, when they were ſent from Chriſt to declare the grace of God in Jeſus Chriſt? what was there any condition made for wages or hire? *John* 10. *The Hireling is no good Shepheard*, as by ſad experience hath been found in all that are called Chriſtian Nations; & how came they in, but over hedges and by-wayes, and inſtead of *laying down their lives for the ſheep, they have devoured them*: But you will ſay, *the labourer is worthy of his hire*? pray what did the Diſciples want, when they returned? could not the Goſpell yeeld its encreaſe, as well in the gaining ſoules to God, as alſo in the maintenance of them that work in the harveſt? therefore you have no warrant to uſe unlawfull means to come by maintenance, as tythes, which is altogether *unlawfull and Anti-Chriſtian*, and that which doth extinguiſh the light of the Goſpell.

Again, this your argument muſt of neceſſity unvaile much of the falſeneſſe of the hearts of thoſe Miniſters, that make the non-payment of tythes to be the alone wheel that moves their Zeal for the publication of the Goſpell, and the bloud that moves in the veins, by which they are made ſtrong in the work of the Miniſtery; for by withholding of tythes they are weakned in the work, and their ſpirits cannot act, and ſo are become dumb; theſe are ſad ſoul-Phyſitians, that though the poor ſouls are like to famiſh for want of ſpirituall food, they may famiſh and periſh if they have not wherewithall to give them the tythes they demand, like ſome Phyſitians, which will have their money in hand, though in the meane time the Patient is like to periſh for want of their help: But you ſay they are diſcouraged by want of tythes, which is their maintenanee; ſurely well they may, when as they ſhall ſeek their maintenauce in an unwarrantable way, having no Goſpell precept for it: Nor doe we judge that there is any cauſe of diſcouragement, or rather that they ſhould complaine that they are diſcouraged for not being maintained by an errour, and ſuch an errour, as even amounts to hereſie it ſelfe, for what greater hereſie can there be, then to deny Chriſt come in the fleſh? but the inforcing of Circumciſion, Tythes, with

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the ſervices and rights of the Leviticall Law, doth extend ſo far as to the denying Chriſts coming in the fleſh; therefore pray do not think to draw us ever a whit the more to be of your opinion in that particular of tythes, or the lawfullneſſe of it, becauſe the non-payment thereof is a diſcouragement to your preaching, or a weakning to your ſpirits; we could wiſh that this diſcouragement would work your hearts into an humble frame, or temper, then you would not cry ſo outragiouſly againſt the Saints and ſervants of God, which are ſo kept by his power, as not to ſubmit to your wayes and worſhip for not paying of tythes: It is not *Hezekiahs* command, as you infer, to the people that were under the Leviticall Law, that can be any example for our practiſe of paying of tythes for your encouragement: And concerning the Juſtice of God, whereas you ſay, It is juſt with God to withdraw his bleſſing, by reaſon we cannot pay tythes for your maintenance;

We may juſtly ſay it is juſt with God to draw his bleſſing from your endeavours, and that upon good ground, by reaſon that you go on in an illegall way, contrary to precept or example to urge that as your due, which never was, and to preſſe it ſo hard on the conſciences of any, ſo that you have intrapped multitudes into your ſnares and gins: but this be ſure, that inſtead of a bleſſing you ſpeak of, you may fear the contrary, leaſt that the curſe of God will light upon you, and all your proceedings, that ſeek to dethrone the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to ſet up your own power, and to nullifie his Lawes, and to enact the *Law of Moſes*, or rather the *Law of men*; but as the foundation of that Law is ſandy, having no more weight but *antient cuſtome*, as you falſely aſſume, *time out of mind*, ſo the fall of it will be great, when your ſins are ripened, and the time is come of your downfall, and then your griefe will be more and more encreaſed. But now we ſhall proceed to your fifth reaſon, to examine what weight that hath whereby to work forth our conſciences to this point of yours, concerning the *payment of tythes to Miniſters of the Goſpell.*

Reaſ. *It is a ſin* (ſay you) *wherein, and whereby the defrauder robs his*

his own ſoul of that ſpirituall benefit and advantage, which he might get by ſuch a Miniſtery, for it is juſt with God to ſay to ſuch a man, thou withdraweſt maintenance from my ſervant, and I will withdraw my bleſſing from my own Ordinance, ſo that the word preached, by whomſoever it is diſpenſed, ſhall do thee no good at all, but rather it ſhall be a ſavour of death to thy own condemnation, thy ſoul ſhall never proſper or thrive by any Sermon thou heareſt.

We admire to ſee or hear from any man ſuch raſh inconſiderate cenſures, when as our Lord and Maſter Chriſt Jeſus hath left us ſuch a warning piece in *Mat. 7. Judge not leaſt thou beeſt judged.* For matter of fraud or cheating, we think we have ſufficiently proved the *Prieſts*, we mean the *Presbyterian Prieſts are the greateſt defrauders*, therefore we ſhall not now touch any further upon that, but to ſhew in this particular your cunning cautelous wiles, wherein you lye in wait to deceive. But we are exhorted *not to let any man beguile us.* We hope the Lord will ſtill ſupport us with the aſſiſtance of his Spirit to diſcern all your wiles, and eſpecially this of your *injunction of Tythes.* But you go about to fright us with the *juſtice of God*, and you meaſure Gods Juſtice, which is an attribute in himſelf (unchangeable) by the Juſtice of men, who are mutable; in this you ſhew a great preſumption to meddle with Gods Juſtice, but in this you are raſh and cenſorious, as in all the reſt of your reaſons: But for anſwer, we have already proved, that *Tythes are not maintenance for Miniſters under the Goſpell*, but were to Prieſts under the Law; therefore it would be ſin to perform any unlawfull action, for the maintenance of any, though you were Goſpell Miniſters, but to pay Tythes is unlawfull; therefore no ſinne to deny the paying thereof, for the maintenance of Miniſters, for what God hath not commanded, if we make it our duty, though commanded by man, it is *will-worſhip*, as worſhipping of Angells, &c. *Coloſ. 7. 18, 19.* and God may ſay, *Who hath required this at your hands, Eſa. 1. 12.* It is not then our pleading, *Authority commanded us*, will acquit us at that day, though *in civill actions we ought to be obedient to the Authority in being*; but tythes was a ceremony

ny of the Leviticall Law, as well as Circumcision, which are both abolished: therefore how can you expect a blessing from God upon the work of your Ministery, so long as you plead for any false worship; it is all one as if you pleaded for *Baal*, which was idolatry; So tythes being that which is abolished, is now in opposition to the Gospell, therefore idolatry and heresie, which is a *sin highly displeasing to God:* and for heretiques, *we are not so much as to eat withall.* Therefore you may not marvell why you are abandoned by so many people whose consciences are tender concerning the worship of God, by reason that you do maintain a false worship. But concerning Gods blessing, which alwayes accompanies his own Ordinance, many thousands of this Nation have had great and large experience of: We mean such as are not of the *Presbyterian Order*, but such unto whom God of his infinite mercy hath made known his truth, and discovered the darkness of those who would be called *Presbyterians*, who indeed are zealous (many of them) in their profession; but their zeal is blind in many things, as in this of tythes, which makes them, like *Saul*, to breath out persecution against the Saints, to disquiet their peaceable being; yea they will take hold of the sword of the Magistrate to prosecute their designes. But, we hope, as the Lord hath overthrown their designes against the peace of this Commonwealth, so he will also in this great designe of disturbing the peace of his people of this Nation, who are indeed the pillars upon which the safety of the Nation lieth, and take away the pillars, the house must needs fall. *Oh, that the Parliament would consider this, and stand for the liberty of those that have spent their lives and estates for the liberty of this Nation, and that God would put it into their hearts to take off all heavy burdens, and even this unsupportable yoke of tythes from this Nation!* Againe, we conceive you have somwhat inlarged your self, in saying, *by whomsoever it is dispensed, the word is dispensed, but shall do thee no good at all, but rather a savour of death, &c.* You seem here by this argument, to reach all Ministers, as well true as false, and so long as the people abstain from paying tythes to the *Parish Priest*; beare with

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us, if the title *Priest* be put in, (for tythes imply, you appropriate Priesthood to your selves) *though they do hear a Minister rightly constituted, yet no benefit shall accrue* (say you) *to their soules, but on the contrary a curse*, this is a very sad and lamentable condition, that such a poor soul shall be in; we mean that such a man (who thorough tenderneſſe of conſcience doth refuſe to pay tythes to the Prieſt that miniſtreth in the Pariſh where he lives) ſhall receive no benefit from whomſoever he heareth.

But this we abſolutely deny: For firſt of all, if he ſhall refuſe thorough the tenderneſſe of his conſcience (deſiring only to be regulated by the Word) to hear you, he doth well, for *that which is not of faith, is ſin*; and a man ought to be perſwaded of what he believes to be true, and conſequently he doth ſin againſt his conſcience, if he heareth ſuch a one, that goeth about to perſwade, or inforce him to do any thing, againſt his conſcience, & you teach that to *pay tythes is the duty of believers, both by the Law of God and man, and he believes that to pay tythes*, is a ſin, by reaſon he hath no warrant from the Word for it being a believer.

Secondly, if ſuch perſon ſhould refrain the hearing of him, that declareth the word or mind of God, as the truth is in Chriſt, according to that light which God hath endowed him withall, certainly he ſhould ſin in an high nature, a ſin of omiſſion; and you muſt acknowledge the bleſſing of God doth accompany his own Ordinance; except you hold there is no Ordinance of God held forth by any but the *Presbyterian Miniſters*, who preſſe ſo hard for tythes. And thirdly, experience witneſſeth the contrary, how many thouſand poor ſouls have been converted from their naturall eſtate by the diſpenſators of the Word, even by thoſe of ſelect Churches, though you may term their converſion ſubverſion, or deluding, yet our experiences witneſſe to us the contrary; therefore the inference you draw muſt needs fall to the ground.

Your ſixth reaſon is, *That it is a ſin that provokes God to curſe a man in his outward eſtate and trading*, as you inſtance in that of *Mal.* 3. 9. Ye are curſed with a curſe, for ye have robbed, &c. *It is uſuall with God to pay ſinners with their owne*

coyn, they rob God in tythes, and God robs them of their trade and livelyhood; they grudge the Miniſters maintenance, and God even grudgeth them bread for their families, ſo that they uſually turn bankrupts, or are ſo much in debt, that they are aſhamed to ſhew their faces.

We have already proved that the non-payment of tythes is not robbing of God, therefore that place is of no force to prove, that believers *rob God by not paying tythes*, but on the contrary, he that payeth tythes doth rob God, by reaſon in that action he doth abet unto the unlawfulneſſe of their practiſe who uphold the Prieſthood of *Aaron* to be ſtill in being, whenas we own no other Prieſthood then Chriſt Jeſus, that Prerogative alone belongeth to him, then there is no curſe, but rather a bleſſing, by diſowning the unlawfull practiſe of paying tythes, and conſequently they are bleſſed in their trading.

But whereas you ſay, *they grudge the Miniſters maintenance*, we believe none that have learned the leſſon of the Apoſtle, *thee they which preach the goſpel, ſhall live of the goſpel, and that thoſe which freely ſow in ſpiritualls, ſhould reap of carnalls*, ſhould grudge a true Miniſter of the Goſpel maintenance, therefore your charge is too large in that particular alſo; we grudge no mans maintenance; much leſſe ſuch as labour *in the word and doctrine*, and in charity, we judge, that none of the people of God are ſo hard hearted; therefore your conſequence which you raiſe, muſt needs fall; *That that is the reaſon ſo many turn Bankrupts and run in debt*, &c. It were a hard matter to prove that God pays men in their own coyn, in this life, for generally the wicked and ungodly and covetous of this world do thrive, and grow rich, and encreaſe in worldly goods; but on the contrary, many that are ſincere Iſraelites, as *Nathanael*, doe live but meanely in this world.

But we ſhall proceed to the ſeventh reaſon, in your paper.

It is a ſin againſt the Goſpel, becauſe it hinders the progreſſe and ſucceſſe of it, for ſuch men do as much as in them lies, extinguiſh the light, by taking away the Oyle that feeds it. It is obſerved

ſerved by that excellent book, Vindication Presb. Gov. page 81. *That* Julian *the Apoſtate, that curſed enemy of Chriſt and his Goſpel, did by taking away tythes do more miſchiefe to the church of God, then all the perſecuting Emperors that were before him; for the perſecutors took away only the Miniſters, and (their bloud was the ſeed of the church) but taking away tythes, took away the Miniſter himſelf.*

In this reaſon of yours you have made out to the world, that the non-payment of tythes is a ſin againſt the Goſpel, therefore becauſe you make it out a ſin of ſo high a nature, we ſhall anſwer your reaſon in the ſeverall parts thereof, and anatomize it in the ſeverall members thereof.

Firſt, that which is a ſin againſt the Goſpel, muſt be a breach of ſome known inſtitution of Jeſus Chriſt, either in precept, or example, but tythes were never an inſtitution of Jeſus Chriſt for believers to obſerve, therefore no ſin againſt the Goſpel, though you ſay that place in *Luke* 11. 42. proves tythes to be an injunctiou of Chriſt: That place of Scripture, as before is inſerted, fully importeth Chriſts reprehenſion of the Phariſees for being ſtrict in rhe obſerving of trivial things, and leaving the weightier, as [*of judgement, and the love of God.*] Now from this place you can prove tythes no more the duty of believers, then the former offices of the Law, as Sacrifices and Offerings for ſin by them which were Levites, and ſerved in the Temple and Tabernacle, which are all put to an end by the Sacrifice of Chriſt Jeſus, *Heb.* 9. 11. and the 10. *c.* 9, 10, 11, 12. *v.*

But tythes, as was well obſerved by a brother in the Goſpell in certain replies heretofore ſet forth by him, are not morall and perpetuall, and now under the Goſpell to be paid or taken, for theſe reaſons.

Firſt, becauſe it calls for the ſetting up of the Jewiſh Temple, tabernacle, and altar, &c.

Secondly, becauſe it calls for the Prieſthood of *Aaron* and the Levites in their former office to ſerve.

Thirdly, becauſe it layes a yoke of bondage upon him that pays his tythes, and upon him that takes tythes, which the Goſpell ſets at liberty; and how dare any man charge that to

be a ſin againſt the Goſpell, when we *ſtand faſt to the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free, Gal.* 5. 1. *v.* Therefore it is your groſſe erronious opinion to charge the non-payment of tythes to Goſpel Miniſters to be *a ſin*, yea and *a Goſpel ſin*; yet we hope this your raſh cenſure ſhall not *bewitch us* to be *withdrawn from the love of the truth*, or to obſerve Leviticall ceremonies for Goſpel Ordinances, therefore the non-payment of tythes is no *Goſpel ſin.*

Secondly, neither doth the non-payment of tythes hinder the progreſſe of the Goſpel, by reaſon that the Goſpel is not furthered in its progreſſe by any unlawfull practiſe, as hath been ſufficiently proved; therefore no let or hinderance, but rather the contrary; for the obſervation of any Leviticall ceremony doth extinguiſh the light of the Goſpel, and ſo conſequently it doth hinder the progreſſe thereof. And here pray take notice of your abſurdity in this particular, as if tythes were that which would be any furtherance to the progreſſe of the Goſpel; we confeſſe it may be a hinderance of *your progreſſe in your Miniſtery*, and of the ſucceſſe thereof, but no hinderance of thoſe that are true Goſpel Miniſters, neither of the ſucceſſe of it.

Again, have you any ground for this reaſon from any of the Apoſtles? When was the Goſpel ſo free in its progreſſe as in the Apoſtles time, who taught us, that the Ceremoniall Law was aboliſhed, and tythes being part of the Ceremoniall Law, if that comes in being again, it muſt needs hinder the ſucceſſe and progreſſe of the Goſpel: Therefore of neceſſity that part of your reaſon muſt needs fall to the ground, having not ſo much as the face of truth to uphold it.

Thirdly, In that you ſay, *ſuch men do, as much as in them lies, extinguiſh the light, by taking away the oyle that feeds it.*

Here we do alſo admire at the weakneſs of your argument, to make *tythes to be the oyle, that gives light to the Goſpel*; But to the firſt we anſwer, on the contrary, that ſuch men do as much as in them lies, diſcover the true Goſpel-light from that darkneſs and obſcurity which tythes would ſhadow the light of the Goſpel withall, by unvailing it from that, which Chriſt hath put an end unto, we mean all ceremoniall Rights, &c.

&c. But pray what light is it you mean? Is it the light of your underſtanding (which in this particular is already darkened, therfore cannot be extinguiſhed) or the light of the Goſpel, which is the light of truth? but by your foregoing reaſon, we conceive rather the later; if then, obſerve that it is by this light our eyes are inlightened, to diſcover the darkneſs of this opinion, that, *The non-payment of tythes doth extinguiſh the light of the Goſpel.*

Fourthly, whereas your inference is, that it *takes away the oyle that feedeth it*; we anſwer, do you count tythes, or the payment thereof the *oyle that feeds the light of the Goſpel*? Pray, was that the oyle the fooliſh virgins lacked, ſo that their lamps went out? We think rather it is the Spirit of God, which giveth light to the Goſpel, and this lieth beyond the reach of any man to take away; We read of many oyles in Scripture, as the *annointing oyle*, &c. and the *oyle* wherewith Chriſt was annoynted, even *the oyle of gladneſſe above his fellowes*; but we never yet read that tythes were called by the name of *oyle*, nay ſuch *oyle*, as *feeds the light of the Goſpel.* Pray when was the light of the Goſpel more darkened, then when the Biſhops of our later days had ſo many ſpirituall livings, or *tythe oyle*, as you call it? Did that oyle which they had in ſuch abundance add any thing to the light of the Goſpel? Nay rather, did it not ſuffocate it? So now may we truly ſay of you that are *Prieſts of tythes*, by impoſing or receiving of tythes, ye do (as much as in you lies) take away the true *oyle* that feeds this light, by reaſon that you do not diſcover the ſpirituall ſenſe and meaning of the Goſpel, but cloud the glorious light of it, by re-edifying of the Leviticall ceremony of Tythes.

But we ſhall take a view of that ſaying of yours concerning *Julian the Apoſtate*, who (by your affirmation) *did more harm by taking away tythes, then the perſecuting Emperors did by taking away of the Miniſters.* If you have no ſtronger argument to prove his Apoſtaſie then the bare taking away of tythes, he cannot in that be proved an Apoſtate: but if he did this action from a right principle, he was more a friend to the profeſſion of the Goſpel, then an enemy: and we hope

and

and heartily wish, that the *Parliament of this Commonwealth* would unburthen this Nation from this superstitious ceremony of tythes. O that the profit, which the first fruits and tythes do yeeld were not so much esteemed by them, as to make it an hinderance of their proceedings in this particular! It is very observable that many of the *Kings of Israel did that which was right in the sight of the Lord*; yet this is charged upon them, that the *high places were not taken down*, untill God raised up that *good King Josiah*, who pulled them down to the ground, and burned the bones of them that offered sacrifices on them: but we hope there are many amongst our Worthies, we mean those of the Parliament and Army, whom God in his time will make like unto *Iosiah*, who shall root up this grand idol of *imposition of tythes*, which so blasphemously is called *the oyle that feeds the light of the Gospel*, Therfore we hope by this time you may see clearly, that the *non-payment of tythes doth not hinder the progresse of the Gospel*; but on the contrary, doth further it: For, if the intruding enemies of the Gospel, we mean those false teachers spoken of by the Apostle, *Galat.*3. did *bewitch them from the love of the truth*, by urging of Circumcision, and the observation of the Ceremoniall Law (which made the Apostle fear, he had *laboured in vain, forasmuch as Christ was not yet formed in them*) then certainly the urging of the necessity of paying tythes, doth hinder the free progresse of the Gospel, and eclipse the light of it, and keeps a poor soul under that *Schoolmaster* which was *to bring us to Christ*; but now Christ is revealed, he is *the end of the law for righteousnesse to every one that believeth*, and consequently no longer need of that to be our Schoolmaster.

But in your last Reason your cry may well be called outragious, as if you were bereft of your senses, *It is a sin that will not be pardoned upon repentance, unlesse there be a restitution as well as repentance; according to that of* Augustine, Non remittitur peccatum, nisi restituatur ablatum: *Thy sin shall not be pardoned, unlesse that which thou with-holdest unjustly be restored.*

We know our Saviour saith, that all *sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men save the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*, and

and such a one certainly that sinneth that unpardonable sin, hath his heart shut up from repentance; and a sin committed against God is of a higher nature then any sin against man, but in all that you have said, you cannot prove the non-payment of tythe to be a sin, but on the contrary, we have proved it to be a sin to pay tythes, and consequently the non-payment of tythes cannot lay any such burthen upon the conscience of any man, as to make your reason in this particular of any force; but you may well be compared to the Scribes and Pharisees, which laid heavy burthens upon mens shoulders, and would not feel the weight of them themselves. Again, if this your Argument should stand, that any man hath unjustly with-holden your right or due, we hope you will grant, that many times God gives a man an heart to repent when he hath not wherewithall to make restitution. But we never read of any sin to be unpardonable, except it was the sin against the Holy Ghost, but the non-pryment of tythes caunot be proved a sin, much lesse of that nature. Then on the contrary, if (as hath been sufficiently proved) that to demand tythes under the dispensation of the Gospel by any that are Gospel-Ministers, or pretend so to be, is a sin against the Gospel, for tythes were never injoyned by our Saviour for believers to observe, and to presume to make an injunction for any duty, where there is no precept nor example, is *highly displeasing to God*, and comes under the reprehension of the Holy Ghost in the last of the *Revelation, he that addeth to the words of this book*, &c. Therfore it behoveth you that stand so much for tythes, to examine well and seriously your own hearts, and repent of this your evill practice, lest the sin you charge upon others be not one day laid to your charge.

But the last refuge you have is this, that it is a sin will cry for vengeance, when the sinner on his death-bed is crying for mercy, as appears by that remarkable Scripture, James. 5. 3.

Now if the hire of the labourers in mans vineyard kept back by fraud cryeth, how dreadfull will the cry be of the hire of Gods labourers in Gods Vineyard, kept back by robbers and defrauders! I tremble to think of it.

We hope by the time you have read over the replies to your former reason and Proposition, your spirit will be more calm then here you have shew'd your self, but that it is usuall with many of you to thunder out hell

and

and damnation against all those that cannot through conscience truly inlightened obey your humane traditions and legall ceremonies, and forget and leave out *judgement and the love of God*, as if the worship of God consisted in those abolished legall rites and ceremonies; but in this, you seem to shew little of the spirit of him, that is the *good Shepheard of the Sheep*, but rather like ravening Wolves you seek to devoure them; But indeed, as you have well said to that purpose, that you are defrauded of your hire, do you not herein demonstrate your selves to be hirelings? therefore in *Joh.* 10. *The Hireling is no good Shepheard, but comes in at the wrong door, and is a theefe and a robber*; and how many of these hirelings, both in Country and City have for a time continued in a Parish, but when they have heard of a greater living or parsonage, have relinquished their flock, and given it over to strangers, or left it destitute. Will not this sin at that day rise up in judgement against many of you *Tythe-Priests*? Ye can be contented to call your selves *Gospel Ministers*, which (if you were) ye would not strive so much to set up the rites and ceremonies of the Leviticall Law; ye would rather preach Jesus Christ, and that freely from a principle of love; and as long as you continue thus in your outragious cry, and censorious judgings, (which are but the passions of the mind, which the people of God have learned to crucifie with Christ) you do but the more make out the truth of the Words, that the strength of your Kingdome is going down, and the fear thereof makes you cry out for help, and use all unlawfull means to make good your argument, even to the wresting of the Scriptures, as that in *Luke* 11. 42. upon which is built all your whole Fabrick, which appears like all the rest to be built upon a sandy foundation, which is falling, and shall fall to the ground, and God will put it into the hearts of his people, that they shall vindicate the truth in this particular. O that the Rulers of this Nation would discharge their Vow to Almighty God, in setting this Nation at liberty from this great and unsupportable burthen of tythes, which is not only (as hath been proved) Anti-christian, but a bondage, even like that of the Ægyptians over the children of Israel; for as they set Taskmasters over them, so these Priests, more like Ægyptians then Christians, do set Taskmasters over the people to enforce them, and that against their consciences to pay; and are there not some now in prison upon the same accompt? and others under prosecution also, and will not their cry ascend up into the ears of the Lord for vengeance? Oh that particular interests into unlawfull gain were not that which doth blind the eyes of many of this Nation, that they cannot make use of the opportunity which God hath put into their hands! But it is our hope, that as the putting down of Bishops (who were as *Lords over Gods Heritage*) was one of the first acts of the *Worthies in Parliament*, so the taking away of Tythes shall not be the last which shall be acted by them.

FINIS.